IT'S THE INCREDIBLE

Mutant Pop

COMPACT DISC CATALOG

Making CDs cool again since 2021.™

catalog
21–A
May 2021

Compact Discs Only?!? What gives?

Hello old friends, children of old friends, and new friends who have blundered into this catalog unawares. It has been a while. Welcome back!

It took me some time, deep thinking, and floating a series of weird ideas, but I think I have solved the mystery of how to relaunch Mutant Pop Records in the age of digital streaming, free listening at Bandcamp, and costly 12" vinyl that takes months to get pressed. (Do bear in mind that we live in an era in which most of the best pop-punk bands have an expectation of all of these things...)

The catalog in your hands is part of the solution to the big puzzle. I've got literally thousands of CDs to rehome. There are many thousands more out there in the basements and garages of label dudes. I just need to find the serious collectors of 1990s punk and to convert this inventory into chips to squander making wonderful new things. Simple, right?

Compact discs remain important to music fans. I am preaching to the choir for many of you. Others might not fully get it. Just this: *most pop-punk and power pop albums of the 1990s were not released on LP and will never be reissued on LP*. If you want the original, physical manifestations of these releases in your collection — documents of bands and the labels that supported (or in some cases exploited) them — one *must* collect CDs to get there.

Your new car doesn't have a CD player? CDs are simple to rip flawlessly. You don't have a player in your house? CD players are cheap and easy to find. And please, ***make sure your kids have a boombox*** — yeah, there is such a thing and they aren't expensive! Or drop a few coins on a really nice one. Either way.

Most of the people making whiny, bullshit excuses about "I can't play CDs" are the very same people who think dishing $9.99 to the Very Big Corporation every month for their "convenient" music stream somehow absolves them from actually supporting the underground music scene. That's not how things work, that's not the way shit gets done. If you wonder why lameness is so prevalent and why LP packages are so expensive and why the limited edition games have become so repetitious, look in the mirror, bucko.

The supply of great pop-punk is fine, killer material is flowing like never before. And the demand is there. At the same time there has never been a better moment to rediscover truly great — and sometimes not so great! — 1990s music than now. Moreover, after a quarter century I will now finally grudgingly accept PayPal, ha ha.

Seriously though, thank you for your support and welcome back to the old neighborhood.

—T. Chandler

BEATNIK TERMITES NEW ALBUM!
RELEASE DATE: MAY 21, 2021

SWEATIN' TO THE TERMITES
MOM'S BASEMENT RECORDS
CD (300) / LP (500) / CS (50)

I've got 25 copies of the first pressing CD which started to mail on the street date.

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Time Flies When You're Having Fun

A chat with Pat Kim of BEATNIK TERMITES

Timbo: **Pat Fucking Kim of the amazing Beatnik Termites! How the hell are you, man? It has been a while for both of us……. Whatcha been up to for the last, oh, I don't know, twenty years?**

Pat: I've been working a day job as a Software Engineer for the most part and popping back in the music scene periodically!

So you've got a new full-length smashing on our planet in a harmony-drenched bolt from above on May 21st, I understand… How long has that wonderful thing been in the works?

Pat: It's definitely been a slow gradual piecemeal endeavor. About 2/3 of it are songs I wrote over the course of the past 22 years and the rest are songs I co-wrote within the last 2 years with Chris Hubbard and Mikey Methven, our bassist and drummer, respectively.

How did you handle the recording of *Sweatin' to the Termites*? Where was that recorded and over how long a period? How much did it cost to record? How was mastering handled?

Pat: We made sure we were well-rehearsed and had 99% of the vocal parts already worked out ahead of time. Then we went into Orion Studios here in Baltimore with Joe Tracey, who is an extremely talented and efficient engineer. He's so easy to work with and skilled at what he does. We just told him what we were going for artistically and he made it happen so effortlessly. We went in January of 2020 and over the course of many weekends, and occasional weeknights, we finished it by the end of the summer. It cost us $6,315 to track and mix. We spent the first 2 days tracking drums and a single day tracking bass and guitars. We spent several weeks tracking vocals and probably about the same amount of time mixing the album. No autotune/pitch correction was used. It's all 100% natural. I've always been vehemently against that. I think it sounds fake and it really doesn't truthfully reflect the actual ability of the singer to sing on key. So in a way it's kind of a scam when you think about it. The album was mastered by J. Powell at Steinhaus (aka Cliffy Huntington) who does a great job.

To my ears, "Out of My League" hits me as a classic Termites tune from the new album. It structurally seems like one of your songs but that's not your lead vocal is it? What's the story?

Pat: Well I already had the chordal arrangement and the main lyrical/melodic hooks for the refrain/outtro, along with some melody fragments for the verses. Based on the hook line, we knew it was going to have a self-deprecating George McFly type theme of unrequited love. With that in mind, Chris pretty much ran with it and wrote the melody+lyrics for the verses and bridge. When I tried singing the song, it was missing something that I couldn't quite put my finger on. So on a whim I suggested to Chris that he give it a shot and lo and behold we struck gold! His voice just really opened up the song. Then I got the idea to do a Lennon-McCartney style harmony underneath his lead vocal line and then everything clicked into place. When we got in the studio I worked out a higher line for Mikey to sing to make it a three part harmony.

Since this album has 13 songs, it also occurred to us it was a good idea to intersperse a couple songs featuring alternate lead vocals for a little variety and to change it up a bit. We figured we'd throw a curve ball here and there with the goal of keeping listeners engaged. Hence we also had Mikey take lead vocals on a song ("Summer Summer").

"Rubber City Roller Girl" is the one that gets me dancing. Pretty classic 1960s doo-woppy sounds together with a taste of classic surf-rock drum work — and a roller derby theme! Just fucking fabulous! Tell us a little about that song…

L-R: Mikey (d/v), Pat (v/g), and Chris (b/v)

Pat: Well my friends Ron and Amy Mullens, who coach the Akron Ohio Rubber City Rollergirls, approached me and asked if we could make them a theme song. So I promptly got to work. I already had this surf riff going through my head at the time and I worked the lyrics into it. I purposely put a lot of dead stops where you wouldn't normally expect them to be. So despite the simplicity of the melody and chord progression, it keeps it interesting and it has the effect of catching people off guard the first time they hear it, which is kind of cool.

"Tell Me Why" is a classic Termites smash, a really fabulous pop song with a buzzing punk guitar and the kind of brilliant lyrics that people adore about you as a songwriter. People will be covering that song twenty years from now… What's your process for writing a song like that? Do you start with a musical hook or a lyric? Do you wake up in the middle of the night?

Pat: Actually that was the first song I wrote for this album back in 1998 right after my father passed from ALS. So it's more of a spiritual song. Also around that time my niece was born just before my dad died and I was reflecting on the cycle of life and death. This was one of the few songs that actually just came to me because I was feeling melancholy at the time due to my life circumstances. I didn't actually put that much effort behind it as it just kind of spontaneously flowed once I got into the zone. That rarely happens though. Most of the time only the main hook comes to me followed by a laborious, painstaking, time-consuming trial and error process of hammering out melodies and lyrics and tweaking them until I find that sweet spot. That said, this particular song is definitely a departure from our typical light-hearted fare.

Long-term fans of the band will notice new players joining you for this fourth full-length, particular the presence of a new singing drummer replacing the talented Reggie Silvestri. When did Reggie leave the band? Why did he leave?

Pat: Reggie left the band back in 2011. However in reality he pretty much checked out mentally by the early 2000's after his first kid was born, hence the long stretch of inactivity for the Termites. While the band hadn't officially broken up, we were effectively dead in the water because he wasn't able to make it a priority. I was hopeful that he'd eventually get back on the horse but after his second child was born in 2011, he put his drumsticks away for good to focus on his family. It is unfortunate that he wasn't able to balance being in a band with being a husband and father. Interestingly our current drummer Mikey has a wife and three kids and somehow manages to juggle being in a band and being a family man without issues. So it's a matter of having the ability to balance priorities. It also helps that all the current members' wives/girlfriends are 100% supportive. It makes an enormous difference when band members aren't constantly being pulled in opposite directions.

I was very lucky to find both Mikey and Chris. They're both extremely reliable, adept players, and are both great singers in their own right. On previous albums I used to sing most of the harmonies because while the other members at the time could pull it off live, in the studio they often had difficulty hitting the parts with the needed precision since the studio is a lot less forgiving. On the other hand, with this new album, Chris and Mikey sang the vast majority of the harmonies of songs I sing lead on. I sing harmonies in some spots here and there and on the songs they took lead vocals on, of course.

This release is out May 21 on Mom's Basement Records, one of the very best American pop-punk labels going today, run by John Proffitt, Jr. How did this completely logical pairing come about? Did you go to him, did he come to you, was there a label-shopping process for the new album?

Pat: Well John and I have been friends for many years. The Termites even played at his wedding years ago. So we've always had a close relationship. He had approached me about doing re-releases of the older material and to make a long story short I said, "Sure but we also have a new album in the works! Are you interested in releasing it?" He said: "Hell, yeah!" And the rest is history!

You've been making music for a long time and have probably seen it all twice… What would be one piece of sage advice that you'd like to share with kids starting bands today?

Pat: My advice for newer bands is to find your own sound. It's okay to wear your influences on your sleeve — heck we do it all the time! However there's a difference between showing an influence and being a straight-up clone. Nobody needs another exact replica of Screeching Weasel or The Queers. They already exist and to be honest it's hard to improve upon the originals.

Also spend more time tweaking melodies and lyrics. Be patient. It's a lot of hard work but in the end it's worth it. For every good song I write I throw out like five bad ones. Be pickier about which songs make it past the cutting room floor. I've made the mistake of letting a few stinkers squeak by but I've gotten pickier as the years have progressed, which is one reason why it takes the Termites so long to write a full albums' worth of material. Nobody wants an album full of filler.

So tell us about a couple harmonies bands that turn your crank… If you could recommend a handful of bands that Termites fans should check out, what would they be?

Pat: As far as contemporary bands go of course you know the Proms and the Teen Sensation Glasses are great. I've been a big fan of Goin' Places and Neon Bone too. Great bands all around. My current favorite right now is the Blendours. Trevor is a phenomenal songwriter. I consider him on the level of Brill Building writers like Sedaka, Goffin–King, and Barry–Greenwich. No joke. That guy has really raised the bar as far as I'm concerned.

What about older shit? Without using either of the words "Beach" or "Boys," what bands from the 1950s or 1960s would Termite lovers be advised to explore?

Pat: When it comes to oldies bands there are just too many to mention but of course I recommend The Marcels, The Angels, Curtis Lee, Diane Renay, and The Raindrops just for starters. Those are some of the artists that have inspired me just to name a few.

Do you have any touring plans now that COVID is becoming less of an existential threat? Anywhere you'd like to play live?

Pat: We will be playing the Savage Mountain Punk Festival on August 12 at Mezzo's in Cumberland, Maryland. We will also be playing the Mom's Basement Festival in Fort Wayne, Indiana on October 1 and also in London, Ontario the following day. We plan on booking a few Midwest dates around that weekend as well. Provided that Europe opens back up next year, in 2022 we plan on playing Raduno Fest in Begame, Italy and doing a two week tour of Italy and Spain right afterwards. Believe me when I say we're totally chomping at the bit in anticipation of playing after a year of this lockdown!

Thank you so much for your time, Pat, I really appreciate it!

Pat: It's been my pleasure, Timbo! Always great talking to you and thanks again for asking me to do this interview and for all your support throughout the years!

Original Compact Discs still available!

Mutant Pop

BACK CATALOG

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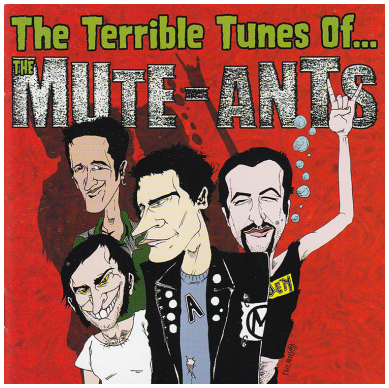

MP-505 - **The Connie Dungs** self-titled **$10**
MP-508 - T*errible Tunes of* **The Mute-Ants** **$10**
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MP-520 - **The Connie Dungs** *Eternal Bad Luck Charm* **$10**
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Mutant Pop Bands on other labels...

- **The Automatics** *Murder/Suicide* (Just Add Water Records) **$10**
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- **The Mixelpricks** *Bitter?* (Bling Bling Records) **$10**
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- **The Peabodys** *Scared Shitless* (Wornout Records) **$10**
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- **The Proteens** *Professional Teenagers* (Imperfekt Records) **$10**
- **The Proms** *Second Base* (Imperfekt Records) **$10**
- **Ruth's Hat** *Nostalgic for Right Now* [Double CD] (Fast Music) **$10**

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